

COLLEGE STATION YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL 2013 RULES

Acronyms – **L.O.S. = Line of Scrimmage**
E.O.R. = End of Run
P.O.I. = Point of Infraction

I. EQUIPMENT

- A. Ball - College Station provides a game ball. Pee Wee for 6U – 10U and the Junior for 12U – 14U.
- B. Uniforms - College Station provides NFL Flag jerseys for all teams: jerseys (that College Station PARD Provides) must be worn during games. No article of clothing may cover any portion of a player's flag. Officials should warn violators of this between plays. (5 yard penalty for someone who gains possession of the football).

The lower uniform may be shorts, warm-ups or any other type of athletic wear. No pockets are permitted on any part of the body (uniform, article of clothing). Drawstrings on pants or shorts must be tucked in. No jewelry of any kind may be worn by players. No headgear with an extended bill may be worn (Example; caps, visors, etc.) (5 yard penalty and player can not play until it is corrected).

- C. Shoes - Any flat soled or completely molded cleat shoes are acceptable. Removable cleats, baseball or track spikes or any shoes that have steel or metal tips are prohibited. All players must wear shoes.
- D. Protective Equipment - Helmets, shoulder pads, thigh pads are prohibited. Any questions as to the legality of players equipment shall be decided by the referee of that game. The use of any unyielding hard substance cannot be used to protect an injury, no matter how well covered or padded. Therapeutic or prevention knee braces can be used if covered from direct external exposure.
- E. Flags - College Station provides flags for the league. During all games teams must use the College Station owned flags.

Each player on the field will wear flags at the waist. Flags must be worn snug around the waist to eliminate being turned partially around the waist during an attempted deflagging. Flags will be worn on both hips.

Illegal alteration, securing or substitution of flags or belts may result in removal of player or players from the game and a 5 yard penalty from L.O.S. of last snap if offense and if defense from P.O.I..

Any player without flags in the proper position at the snap shall be ruled deflagged immediately at the point where he gains possession of the football.

II. LENGTH OF GAMES AND TIME OUTS

- A. Periods - The game shall be played in 2 halves of 18 minutes in length. In all games the clock will be running continuous.

At the end of each half teams will be told that there are 7 plays left in that half.

Clock Regulations - (1) Clock will start each half when the official puts the ball in play, (2) After a team time-out, the clock will start at the snap of the ball, (3) Clock will stop for team time-outs, official time-outs and injuries and at the discretion of the official to retrieve long incomplete passes.

B. Half Time - 5 minutes.

C. Time Outs - Each team shall have 2 time outs per half. Time outs will be one (1) minute in length. Time outs may be called by any player that participated in the last play or the coach.

Additional Time Outs - May be called by the officials at their discretion. If a team exceeds its time out limit in either half: Delay of Game - 5 yard penalty.

III. SCORING

A. Touchdown - Hips in which flags are attached must be on or in advance of the goal line before a touchdown can be awarded.

B. Safety - Ball will be placed on 30 yardline (Midfield) and given to the team that was awarded the safety.

IV. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

A. Players - Each team shall be composed of seven players, however, a team may play with less than 7 players, but both teams do not have to equal the same about of players. There is a minimum of 4 players. Example: If team "A" has 8 players and team "B" has 5 players, then team "A" can play 7 players and team "B" will play 5 players. If team "B" has additional players show up late, they can enter the game between plays as soon as they are ready (just not during a play).

B. Substitutions - No limit on substitutions during game play, however, each player must accumulate a total of one full half of playing time each game. A substitute must enter only when the ball is dead.

"Sleepers" on substitutions will not be allowed on any play. No player may line up closer than 5 yards from the sideline unless he/she came out of the huddle or unless he/she was on the field of play during the previous play and did not leave the field of play.

C. Player & Coach Behavior - Any verbal badgering or derogatory language after officials have asked once for team captain's control can result in players or coaches being disqualified.

First derogatory action or language should be penalized 5 yards and captain warned.

Second derogatory action or language will cause player, coach, or fan to be disqualified plus 5 yards.

Side line players and fans are subject to the same disqualification for abusive, obscene or badgering language. If the captain or coach of the penalized team cannot control the actions of his players and fans, the game can be forfeited.

Any person disqualified/ejected must contact the College Station Parks and Recreation Athletic Staff to be eligible to participate again. Disqualifications/Ejections can be publicized to help control players, coaches, or

fans from continuing to participate without approval to be reinstated. Suspensions may also be publicized.

- D. Faking Excessive Contact - Any player, who in the judgement of the officials, fakes excessive contact for the sole purpose of drawing a penalty may be warned once by the officials and then penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct on the next offense. A warning to one player may be applied to a team as a whole if the officials so state that this warning is to the team. Penalty - (treated as a dead ball foul) 5 yards.
- E. Begging a Call - During a play, if a possible infraction occurs and players or coaches from either team either on the field or on the sideline begin yelling out or "Begging A Call", a penalty of 5 yards can be tacked on to the end of the play. This penalty will be marked off as a dead ball foul even if it occurred while play was in progress.
- F. Sidelines – Each team will occupy one sideline. Players and coaches on the sideline must stay between the 10 yard lines, they cannot get any closer to the goal line than the 10 yardline. This is a dead ball 5 yard penalty and no loss of down.

V. PLAYING REGULATIONS

- A. Coin Toss - At the beginning of the game, a coin toss will be held and the winner will get a choice of offense or defense. The winner of the toss will also choose direction during the first half. The loser will get the remaining option. At the beginning of the second half, offense, defense and direction will change automatically from what occurred during the start of the first half. There is no deferment or choices to start the second half. 6U will not change sides.
- B. Ball in Play - The ball shall be put in play at the beginning of the game, beginning of the second half, after a touchback and after a score by placing the ball on the 20 yard line of the offensive team with 1st down and "line-to-gain". At all times, the ball shall be put in play from the spot marked by the official ball marker. Penalty: illegal snap - 5 yard L.O.S.
- C. Huddle - After the official marks the ball "ready-for-play", offense will have 45 seconds to put the ball in play or else be penalized 5 yards for a delay of game. It is not necessary to huddle after a play if a team wishes to use predetermined plays or audibles.
- D. Motion - There will be no motion on the offense when the ball is snapped. Offensive players can move but must come to a complete stop at least one second (judged by the official) before the ball is snapped.
- E. Encroachment Offsides - Shall be called if either the offense or the defense passes over the plane of their L.O.S. before the ball is snapped. A false movement of the football by the center shall constitute offensive encroachment. These are dead ball fouls and the play shall be immediately whistled dead before play begins and 5 yards automatically marked off against the encroaching team. (Exception: defense encroachment resulting in an offensive first down will become an offensive captain's choice of penalty).
- F. 1st Down - A team will be allowed four downs to advance the ball from one zone to the next. The zone shall be considered reached when the hips (flags) are on or in advance of the line marking the next zone or in this case "the line to gain" when play is declared dead.
- G. Stances - Any stance is permitted.

Line Play - At least 3 offensive players must be on the offensive line of scrimmage and no more than 4 defensive players may be on the defensive line of scrimmage.

Defensive line must be one (1) yard off the ball at the snap. No defensive player may be within 4 yards of the ball if lined up directly in front of the center or within one yard of the ball if lined up to the side of the center at the snap.

- H. Screening-Rushing - The area within flag football that can cause the most problems with regard to officiating, injury, fighting, arguing, and excessive contact is the area of protecting the quarterback. This is the one single most area that must be controlled and the rules governing this area must be clear to both the offense, defense and the officials. Only screen blocking is permitted. **The definition of screen blocking is obstructing the rushers path to the quarterback or ball carrier, as long as it is done behind the line of scrimmage, with any part of the body except head, legs and elbows. The screener must hold (place hands together) his/her hands below the beltline in front or behind his/her body.** Although this method of screening cuts down on excessive contact by the screener, it nevertheless places the screener in a very vulnerable position, therefore, the main responsibility of avoiding contact rests within the rusher.

The rusher may not run over the screener. The rusher may not pull the screener toward him or push the screener away from him. A penalty will be automatically called if the rusher even touches the screener's head as long as the screener is screening upright.

Moving screens behind the L.O.S. for the passer or potential passer is legal. Once the passer or potential passer crosses the L.O.S., all downfield screens must be stationary screens. As the ball crosses the L.O.S., offensive players may maneuver for laterals behind the ball but in doing so must not be deliberately screening any defensive players. They must be clearly in the act of positioning for a lateral. Moving screens shall be penalized from the end of run (E.O.R.) or the point of infraction (P.O.I.), whichever hurts the offensive team the most. If the illegal screen is judged to have caused excessive contact, it will be penalized 5 yards and loss of down. (There cannot be a loss of down if penalty leaves ball in front of line-to-gain and 1st down).

A screener may not leave his feet to screen. IT IS ASKED THAT BOTH THE SCREENER AND THE RUSHER STRIVE FOR NONCONTACT IN THIS AREA.

The screener may not step into the rusher.

Roughing the passer when the pass is incomplete will be marked off 5 yards from the L.O.S. when the pass is complete, the penalty will be 5 yards marked off from the E.O.R. and automatic first down.

If the rusher touches the quarterback in the head in his attempt to block the pass a penalty will be called. This will also go for striking the passer's arm when in a forward motion while attempting to block a pass. Roughing the passer will be called when the rusher, if while attempting to deflag the quarterback or block a pass, lets his momentum carry him into the passer. Defensive players may not have any contact with the passer when he is passing. **NOTE: OFFICIALS SHOULD BE AWARE IF CONTACT IS CAUSED BY PASSER STEPPING UP OR MOVING INTO RUSHER.**

- I. Passing - There can be only one forward pass per play. There can be only two (2) exchanges of the football in the air (forward pass or lateral) which are initiated

from behind the L.O.S. After the 2nd exchange of the football in the air, if completed behind the L.O.S., the football must be run across the L.O.S. A forward pass is defined as a live ball thrown toward the opponents goal line.

A direct handoff or a bobbled, but complete direct handoff, shall not be considered an exchange of the football in the air.

If the passer is beyond the L.O.S. when the football is released, or if a 3rd exchange of the football in the air is initiated from behind the L.O.S., an illegal Forward Pass has occurred and will result in a 5 yard penalty and loss of down if accepted. Illegal forward passes will be marked from P.O.I.

Once the ball has crossed the L.O.S., in the air or in possession of a player, it cannot be passed forward, even if the ball is returned back across the L.O.S. (Illegal Forward Pass).

Intentional grounding shall also constitute an illegal forward pass.

A lateral will be any pass thrown overhand or underhand perpendicular or away from the direction of advancement of team in possession. Forward laterals are treated as an illegal forward pass if beyond L.O.S.

Push or Shovel Passes thrown in any direction is legal if initiated behind the L.O.S. Once a player crosses the L.O.S., push or shovel passes are legal if thrown parallel or behind the ball carrier.

- J. Receiving - All players of both teams are eligible pass receivers. Each player is eligible, even if he steps out of bounds or out of end zone, as long as he catches the ball in bounds or comes down first in bounds with at least one (1) foot. If a receiver comes down with one foot in bounds and one foot out of bounds simultaneously, the pass is incomplete. The lines marking the sidelines and the extreme end of the end zone shall be considered out of bounds if stepped on to any degree.

Two or more offensive receivers or defensive players may touch a pass in succession, resulting in a completion. After a pass is thrown, it is too much to expect of the officials to keep track of exactly who touched the ball and in what order, if receivers and defenders are battling, for possession. Therefore, the only things that will be judged will be (1) did pass interference occur, (2) who caught the ball, and (3) was receiver in bound with at least one foot at moment of possession.

A double reception always goes to the offense.

- K. Pass Interference - Pass Interference Rules shall apply to any pass made from behind the L.O.S., whether it is a forward pass or a lateral pass and applies to both offensive and defensive players. After the pass is in the air, neither pass receiver or defender may touch the other until one of them touches the ball, or else offensive or defensive pass interference may be called. If contact occurs after one of them touches the ball, then pass interference cannot be called unless one of them catches the ball and the other "strips" or attempts to "strip" the ball from his hands.

Receiver Stripping is attempting to take the ball from the grasp of a receiver after he has brought the ball into a possessive position, in which case, Pass Interference will be called: If player established possession of the football, the defender must go for the flag and not the ball.

Any contact that occurs after the pass is touched (excluding Receiver Stripping) and is either complete or incomplete, must be judged by the officials as either Non-Intentional contact caused by both players "playing the ball" or Intentional contact which shall be penalized. Penalty will be 5 yards if incomplete or complete, and if judged to be flagrant, the penalized player may be removed from the game and penalty will be 5 yards.

All pass interference plays, offensive or defensive will be captain's choice penalties. If the captain refuses penalty the play will stand. All offensive pass interference plays which are accepted, shall be marked 5 yards from P.O.I., automatic first down.

Defensive pass interference which occurs in the end zone and is accepted: ball will be placed on one (1) yard line, and 1st down.

Screening a receiver's eyes by a defender without playing the football is pass interference and shall be penalized as such.

Bump and Run, or checking an offensive receiver during a passing play will be a 5 yard penalty from P.O.I. and captain's choice.

- L. Deflagging - The ball carrier is down and the ball is dead when the belt is detached from his waist or when the ball or either knee touches the ground. A defensive player may leave his feet to pull the offensive player's flag but may not make contact while doing so. When a defensive player pulls the ball carrier's flag he should stop and hold it above his head for officials to see.

Tackling is prohibited. Tackling is grasping or encircling the body of the ball carrier with a hand or arm. Grabbing the ball carrier's clothing shall be penalized as tackling. If the defensive player reaches across the body of a ball carrier to pull his flag and contact is made, the responsibility of the contact lies with the defensive player. Penalty: yards for tackling (encircling of body) with automatic first down if tackling from P.O.I. or L.O.S. If in the opinion of officials, the act prevented a score, the ball will be placed on the one (1) yard line, first down and goal. The offender will be disqualified if the act was flagrant.

Illegal Deflagging is prematurely pulling an opponent's flag with the intent of making the offensive player ineligible to become a ball carrier. Penalty 5 yards from L.O.S. or E.O.R.

Runner Stripping occurs when a defender attempts to strip or take the ball from the grasp of a player who has the ball in a possessive position, this is a form of Illegal Deflagging.

The intended receiver of either a pass or lateral may be deflagged only after first touching the ball - even while fumbling or bobbling the ball and before possession is established. That receiver will be considered downed at the point he was deflagged.

If the quarterback's arm was in forward motion when his flag was pulled, the pass is allowed. If the passer is legally deflagged as he is passing the football, and later in that play receives the ball back, he shall be downed at that spot. If he is deflagged after he has released the football and he then receives the ball back, illegal deflagging should be called.

A defender may not push or knock a ball carrier out of bounds. Penalty 5 yards from P.O.I.

- M. Quick Whistle - If the official whistles the play dead prematurely, the offense shall have the choice of: (1) accepting the ball where it was whistled dead or (2) replaying the down.

Pretending to pull an opponent's flag (raising empty hand intentionally) resulting in official's "quick whistle", defense will be penalized 5 yards and offense's choice of either #1 or #2 above.

Offensive fouls, if they were committed before quick whistle, have priority over quick whistle.

- N. Ball Carrier - The responsibility of avoiding contact rests with the ball carrier. He must show the officials he made an effort to avoid contact. The ball carrier will not deliberately run or dive into a defensive player. A ball carrier may spin or jump but realize that while spinning or jumping he is in a "state of non-control" and should contact occur as a result of his uncontrolled momentum, he will be penalized. Penalty: 5 yards from P.O.I.
The ball carrier shall not protect his flags by blocking with his hand, arm or head. Flag guarding will be marked 5 yards from P.O.I. and loss of down.

- O. Fumble - When a backward pass hits the ground between the goal lines or a fumble occurs, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team last in possession at the spot where the ball hits the ground or at the spot where the ball goes out of bounds (if in the air).

Forward, offensive fumbles which cross and hit beyond the next line-to-gain or goal line will result in ball being marked dead at point of fumble, and next down.

- P. Center Snap - A center snap may touch the ground before it gets to the quarterback and remain playable if the quarterback fields it cleanly off of a bounce (one or more) or from the ground. However, if quarterback muffs the ball to the ground or the ball goes past the quarterback it is dead where the ball touches the ground. Only PreK – 2nd grade can have direct snaps and they do not have to snap between the legs. Grades 3 - 8 must use shot gun and snap between the legs. **THERE ARE NO CENTER SNEAKS.** You may snap the ball however you want between the legs as long as the center is not offsides.

- Q. Punting - You must declare prior to the play whether you are punting or going for the 1st down. If you declare to punt, the ball will be placed 1 line past the line to gain, but no closer to the goal than the 10 yard line.

- R. Time Left in Game - The on-field-captain or coach may request the amount of time left in the game from the officials at any time. Officials will be expected to give the correct time.

- S. Penalties - All live ball fouls (fouls which occur while play is in progress) are captain's choice. All dead ball fouls (fouls which occur prior to snap or after ball is blown dead) will automatically be marked off. This means if a foul occurs during a down and is a live ball foul and then a dead ball foul occurs both fouls will be enforced. They do not offset, even if against different teams.

After a penalty is called, the captain or coach of the penalized team may discuss it with the officials. Officials will then give the opposing captain his options on the penalty. That captain's first choice will be final.

In the judgement of any game official, the following acts are deliberate or flagrant, the player or players involved may be ejected from the game:

- 1) using fists, kicking or kneeing
- 2) illegal use of hands, forearms or elbows
- 3) tackling
- 4) any deliberate or flagrant act which could cause injury
- 5) any act of unsportsmanlike conduct
- 6) abusive, profane or insulting language
- 7) any act of unfair play
- 8) harassment of officials or other players

Penalties which would otherwise be marked off past the goal line shall be placed on the one yard line.

- T. Play Rule Period - goes into effect at the end of each half, from this point on the clock will no longer be kept, instead there will be 7 plays left in that half or game. The officials will give down, distance and play number on all plays remaining. Teams must continue to make first downs if they want to keep possession as it is with using the clock. However, if they don't make a first down, the defense has a chance to gain possession and use the remainder of the 7 plays.
- U. Offsetting Penalties - If offsetting fouls occur during a down or while the ball is ready-for-play, that down shall be played over. If offsetting fouls occur between successive down, the next down shall be the same as if no fouls occurred. If there is a change of team possession during a down, the teams last gaining possession may decline the offsetting fouls and retain possession after accepting the penalty for its own infraction providing that the infraction occurs after the change in possession. If offsetting fouls occur prior to change of possession, play shall be repeated.

VI. PENALTY CHART

- A. All penalties shall be marked 5 yards unless in the opinion of the officials, the foul is flagrant or excessive contact is made, then the player/coach/fan might be ejected.
- B. In order to establish a simple philosophy in assessing penalties, these general rules hold true with only a few exceptions:
1. All Accepted Penalties: are marked from the E.O.R., L.O.S. or P.O.I. whichever hurts the infracting team the most and the down may or may not be replayed.
 2. All Refused Penalties: the ball stays where blown dead and down is not replayed.
 3. All Live Ball Fouls: are captain's choice.
 4. All Dead Ball Fouls: are not captain's choice and will be marked off.
- C. "Little To Lose Penalties: If the full penalty cannot be marked off due to the field position relative to the goal line, the ball will be marked off to the one yard line.
1. Defensive penalties on teams backed up to within 1 yard from their goal will result in play being run again from L.O.S. plus one free down awarded to offense if they have not scored by the 4th down.

2. Offensive penalties on team backed up to within 1 yard from their goal line will result in loss of down unless there is a change of possession during a play.
 3. Offense Fouls in their own end zone will be captain's choice: Safety or Loss of Down.
- D. 7-Play Period Penalties: If accepted, that play number shall be repeated unless it was offensive pass interference, however, the down may or may not be lost, depending on the penalty.
- E. Penalty Enforcement and Line-To-Gain:
1. Enforcement of any penalty which leaves the ball across the line-to-gain will result in a new line-to-gain (1st down).
 2. After enforcement of any live ball foul which leaves the ball short of the line-to-gain will result in the first down line remaining the same.
- F. All defensive dead ball fouls after a touchdown but before the ball is put in play after change of possession will be penalized from the 20 yard line. All live ball fouls during this period are captain's choice penalties.

GENERAL INFRACTIONS	RULE NUMBER	PENALTY	MARKED FROM	CAPTAIN CHOICE	LOSS OF DOWN IF ACCEPTED
Clothing Covering Flag	I-B	5 YDS	POI/LOS	NO	NO
Improper Equipment	I-D	5 YDS	LOS/EOR	NO	NO
Flag or Belt Improperly Positioned at Possession	I-E	5 YDS	POI/LOS	YES	NO
Flag Improperly Altered or Attached	I-E	5 YDS	LOS/POI	NO	NO
Delay of Game: Time Outs	II-C	5 YDS	EOR	NO	NO
Illegal Substitution	IV-B	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO
Illegal Participation	IV-B	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	IV-C	5YDS	LOS/EOR	YES/NO	NO
Faking Excessive Contact	IV-D	5 YDS	EOR	NO	NO
Begging A Call	IV-E	5 YDS	EOR	NO	NO
Ball in Play	V-B	5 YDS	POI	YES	NO
Encroachment	V-E	5 YDS	LOS	NO (1 exception)	NO
Offsides	V-E	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO

DEFENSIVE INFRACTION	RULE NUMBER	PENALTY	FROM	CAPTAIN CHOICE	FIRST DOWN IF ACCEPTED
Illegal Line Play	V-G	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO
Illegal Rushing	V-H	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO
Contact/Roughing Passer	V-H	5 YDS	LOS/EOR	YES	YES
Pass Interference In: (Playing Field)					
Regulation Time	V-K	5 YDS	POI	YES	YES
7 Play Rule		5 YDS	POI	YES	YES & PLAY # OVER
(End Zone)		BALL ON			
Regulation Time	V-K	1 YD LINE		YES	YES
All Others	V-K	BALL ON 1 YD LINE		YES	PLAY OVER PLUS 1 FREE PLAY IF NEEDED
Receiver Stripping	V-K	SAME AS PASS INTERFERENCE			
Screening Receiver's Eyes	V-K	SAME AS PASS INTERFERENCE			
Bump and Run	V-K	5 YDS	POI	YES	NO
Tackling (Impeding)	V-L	5 YDS	POI/LOS	YES	NO
(Encircling)	V-L	5 YDS	POI/LOS	YES	YES
Impeding T.D.	V-L	BALL ON 1 YD LINE		YES	YES
Illegal Deflagging	V-L	5 YDS	LOS/EOR	YES	NO
Runner Stripping	V-L	5 YDS	POI/LOS	YES	NO
Pushing Ball Carrier Out of Bounds	V-L	5 YDS	POI/LOS	YES	NO
Faking Deflagging	V-M	5 YDS	POI/LOS	YES	CHOICE OF #1 OR #2 UNDER VI-N
Sideline Interference		5 YDS	EOR/POI	YES	YES

OFFENSIVE INFRACTION	RULE NUMBER	PENALTY	MARKED FROM	CAPTAIN CHOICE	LOSS OF DOWN IF ACCEPTED
Delay of Game: 45 Seconds	V-C	5 YDS	LOS	NO	NO
Illegal Motion	V-D	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO
Illegal Screening (Behind LOS)	V-H	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO
Illegal Downfield Screening	V-H	5 YDS	POI/EOR	YES	NO
Illegal Forward Pass	V-I	5 YDS	POI	YES	YES
Intentional Grounding	V-I	5 YDS	POI	YES	YES
Forward Lateral (Beyond LOS)	V-I	5 YDS	POI	YES	YES
Pass Interference In: (Playing Field & End Zone)					
Regulation Time Period	V-K	5 YDS	LOS	YES	YES
7 Play Rule		5 YDS	LOS	YES	YES & LOSS OF PLAY #
Stiff Arm	V-N	5 YDS	POI	YES	YES
Protecting Flags	V-N	5 YDS	POI	YES	YES
Illegal Snap	V-P	5 YDS	LOS	YES	NO
Delay of Game: Declare Punt	V-Q	5 YDS	LOS	NO	NO